

WEST DEAN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Council Offices,
Coleford, Glos.
November 1944.

HEALTH
A 15 NOV 1944
C.H.

To the Chairman and Councillors of
the West Dean Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Percival and Gentlemen,
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1943.

We have the honour to present to you a report on the health conditions in the district for the year 1943. In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health circular 10/44 much has been left out, but it is thought that the more important matters have been dealt with. It is regretted that the Report has not been circulated until somewhat late in 1944 but with the depleted staff it is difficult to spare the time necessary for its compilation.

		<u>VITAL STATISTICS</u>			
		<u>Legitimate</u>	<u>Illegitimate</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Live Births	Male	169	6	175	
	Female	163	10	173	348
Still Births	Male	3	-	3	
	Female	4	-	4	7
Death of Infants) under 1 yr of age)	Male	8	-	8	
	Female	9	-	9	17

DEATHS Male 118
Female 85 203

Excess of live births over deaths. 145

Birth rate 19.6 per 1,000 population.

Death rate 11.4 " " "

(The birth and death rates for this area compare very favourably with those for England and Wales. Registrar General's Estimate of population (Mid 1943) 17,790)

Chief causes of death.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>1942 Total</u>
Tuberculosis	9	8	17	8
Cancer	18	9	27	27
Heart Disease	19	29	48	66
Pneumonia	5	3	8	11
Nephritis	10	4	14	10
Violent and other causes	15	2	17	17
Bronchitis	8	7	15	-
Influenza	6	5	11	-

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

<u>Disease</u>	0-1	1-2	2-5	5-10	10-15	15-25	25-35	35-50	Over 50	<u>Total</u>
Cerebro spinal meningitis								1		1
Diphtheria			1		1	5	3	2		12
Dysentery (Bacillary)	1		1							2
Erysipelas						1	1	3	6	11
Measles	6	13	56	88	7	15	8	1		194
Pneumonia	2		1	5	2	5	1	10	16	42
Puerperal pyrexia							1			1
Scarlet fever	1		9	14	5	2				31
Whooping cough	7	8	27	27						69
<u>Totals.</u>	17	21	95	134	15	28	14	17	22	363

The one case of cerebro-spinal meningitis was in a male and was fatal: there were eight deaths from pneumonia; otherwise there were no deaths in persons suffering from an infectious disease. The total number of cases, 363, compared with 1942, 204 is rather high but this is mainly attributable to the large number of cases of measles. The measles were, generally, of a fairly mild type.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

	0-5	5-15	Total.
Immunised during year.	357	268	525
Estimated child population	1550	3069	4619
% of population now immunised	72	77	

As will be seen from the table of infectious diseases only two cases occurred in young persons under the age of fifteen years. One had been immunised while the other had not. There were no deaths from diphtheria.

The County Council continues to be responsible for the immunising of children in this area and the scheme works well.

TUBERCULOSIS

The following comparative table shows the relative position of this disease at the end of 1942 and the end of 1943.

	N.P.		I		Unstated		Total.	
	1942	1943	1942	1943	1942	1943	1942	1943
Male	(44)	43	(65)	66	(1)	1	108	110
Female	(33)	39	(35)	39	(1)	2	69	80
	(77)	82	(98)	105	(2)	3	177	190

The population distribution of the disease is shown below:

	(Est. Pop)	M.	F.	Total	Cases per 1,000 Pop.
Coleford.	2,900	11	14	25	8.6
English Bicknor.	500	8	4	12	24.0
Lydbrook.	2,500	22	14	36	14.4
Newland.	1,000	4	5	9	9.0
Staunton.	250	-	-	-	-
West Dean.	10,850	65	43	108	10.0
	18,000	110	80	190	10.6

SCABIES - IMPETIGO.

41 cases of scabies and impetigo were removed to Greenway Sick Bay, Littledean. There were 24 girls and 17 boys treated and the average period of treatment was 3 to 4 weeks. None of the cases was a return case. Mild attacks are dealt with by home treatment where the home circumstances are suitable, and the County Council's Treatment Clinic in Coleford also treats and advises many children suffering from a minor attack of this complaint.

WATER.

Main Supply.

The enlarged reservoir on the Buckstone Hill was completed during the year and put into operation. In addition, a new gallery to intercept the Swampool Springs was completed and provided useful additional water. The tank in the Knockalls enclosure was also put into use in 1943 and much water that used to run to waste during the night is now saved by pumping purposes. Also the cost of pumping water has been lessened as double pumping is reduced considerably.

Samples of water were taken regularly and in every case, the treated water was found to be satisfactory for a public supply.

Private Supplies.

Two samples of water were taken from wells used by the public, the report on one showed it to be fair only while the other was badly polluted. All the users of both wells were warned to boil the water before using it and an alternative supply will be provided when conditions permit.

Bathing Pool.

Samples of water from the bathing pool and paddling pool were taken and showed that the water in the bathing pool was satisfactory while the paddling pool had been contaminated by leaves and debris carried in by children's feet. Arrangements were made for the more regular cleaning of the children's pool.

REFUSE COLLECTION.

The Council continued to collect refuse and salvage from more than 90% of the houses in the area and also to use two refuse lorries with six men employed in loading and sorting. More than a quarter of a million refuse bins were emptied during the year and this resulted in 3,000 loads of refuse and salvage. All refuse from Army camps in the area was either collected by this Council's lorries or arrangements were made for its disposal. This scheme worked very well with the benefit of increased salvage for the local authority and simple means of refuse disposal for the military. The value of salvage sold during 1943 was approximately £767 and the net cost of refuse collection remained almost exactly the same as in 1938.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Several house owners installed private water carriage systems during the year, in every case they were septic tanks with overflows, but no start could be made on the main problem of providing proper sewage disposal for the various built up areas of the district. A new sewage treatment plant was completed by the War Department and has, generally speaking worked satisfactorily. A serious nuisance was created by the neglect of a sewage treatment works attached to a camp but, after some emergency work carried out by the Council's men as a matter of urgency, the works were completely cleaned out and overhauled and now function well.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS

The standard of milk productionⁱⁿ the area remained about the same as in 1942 and the reports on School Milk Samples submitted by the County Council continued to be generally satisfactory. Ten samples of milk were taken during the year - with 6 good, 3 fair and 1 bad report. The producer shewing a bad report was re-sampled and showed a considerable improvement.

Three cases of diphtheria occurred at a farm, the milk from which was sold by retail in this area. By arrangement with the Milk Marketing Board this milk was diverted to a bulk dairy where it was pasteurised and the retailer was supplied with pasteurised milk from another source. One case of undulant fever was reported but the analysis of the milk shewed no presence of bacillus abortus.

The number of accredited licences issued by the County Council for this area was 7 and one producer was licensed for tuberculin tested milk.

HOUSING

4 statutory notices were served during the year and all were complied with. In addition a number of minor defects were repaired following informal action. The standard of housing in the district, other than in Council houses, continues to be quite low and it has been found possible only to insist on houses being made wind and weatherproof. No improvements, except one or two by owner-occupiers, were carried out during the year.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

The majority of work connected with this was the supervision of meat in the slaughterhouse at Cinderford as the Sanitary Inspector for East Dean was unfit for duty until the beginning of July. This entailed 4 nights a week and Saturdays and Sundays and made the work of managing both districts extremely arduous. So far as food inspection in West Dean was concerned only minor items were condemned, mainly due to bad handling, and the standard of food and food handling remained high. The 20 bakehouses in the district were visited regularly and the standard maintained was satisfactory.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Sewerage and Drainage.	259
Public Health Complaint.	189
Infectious disease.	144
Housing.	178
Infestation.	53
Refuse & Salvage.	559
Food.	245
Bakehouses.	30
Milk.	145
Water.	64
Camp sites and Caravans.	42
Gas contamination of food.	45
Petrol.	29
Mortuary.	7
Factories and Workshops.	29
Evacuation.	212
Miscellaneous.	372
Schools.	50
Pit shafts and unfenced quarries.	40
	<u>2692</u>

STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health (temporary and part time):

Dr. E. W. Battle M.R.C.S. (England) L.R.C.P. (London).

Sanitary Inspectors (full time):

V. G. Hudson, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

G. J. Watts, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A. (at present in H.M. Forces).

We have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Percival and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants,

E. W. BATTLE,

V. G. HUDSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

Sanitary Inspector.